

REMARKS

On page 2 of the Office Action of May 3, 2005, claims 3-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, and claims 1 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Lerra.

On page 3 of the Action, claims 3-6 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph and to include all of the limitation of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In view of the rejection and indication of allowability, claim 3 has been amended to independent form. Also, since claim 2 was not rejected at all, claim 2 has been amended in independent form. Claim 5 has been amended to obviate the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112. Further, claim 1 has been amended to clearly define the invention.

In claim 1, it is defined that the female member and the male member are made of resin, respectively, and that one of the female member and the male member is entirely formed of the resin with hardness lower than that of the other of the female member and the male member so that said second engaging portion is released from the first engaging portion when one of the male member and the female member is pulled away from the other of the male member and the female member with a force greater than a predetermined level.

In the invention, therefore, even if the engaging portions are not even actuated, when the strong pulling force is applied between the female member and the male member, the engagement between the female member and the male member is released without being broken.

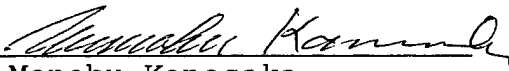
In Lerra, a buckle includes male and female elements 12, 14. The female element 14 includes resilient portions 20, 21, which provide the quick release buckle with improved tactile qualities, making it easier to grasp securely, and thus facilitating cooperative engagement of the two buckle elements by a user (see paragraph 0029 of Lerra).

In Lerra, a part of the male and female elements 12, 14 includes resilient portions to improve tactile qualities, as explained above. In claim 1, one of the female member and the male member is entirely formed of the resin with hardness less than that of the other. Thus, when the male and female members engaged together is strongly pulled, the engagement therebetween is released. Lerra does not disclose the structure and advantages of claim 1 of the invention.

Therefore, claim 1 is not anticipated by Lerra. It is believed that claims pending in the application are allowable over the prior art.

Reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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